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CHEMOTHERAPY OF MALARIA

ANNUAL SUMMARY REPORT

DR. LEO RANE

For the period of June 1, 1970 to May 31, 1971

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Foreword

In conducting the research described in this report, the investigator(s) adhered to the "Guide for Laboratory Animal Facilities and Care", as promulgated by the Committee on the Guide for Laboratory Animal Resources, National Academy of Sciences-National Research Council.

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177,844 compounds were screened for antimalarial activity in mice infected with Plasmodium berghei in the period from December, 1961 to June, 1970, covered by Contract No. DA-49-193-MD-2218.

Table I summarizes the number of compounds tested and the number of mice used under the original contract.

This program is continuing under Contract No. DADA 17-70-C-0100, activated on June 1, 1970.

18,108 compounds were tested for antimalarial activity from June 1, 1970 through May 31, 1971.

Table II records the number of compounds tested and the number of mice used from June 1, 1970, through May 31, 1971.

All compounds tested were obtained from the Department of Medicinal Chemistry at the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research and included:

- (1) compounds structurally related to chemicals of known value as antimalarial agents;
- (2) compounds structurally unrelated to compounds known to have antimalarial activity;
- (3) structural analogues of compounds found active in our test system and representing several novel chemical groups.

Our own breeding colony of ICR/HA Swiss mice continues to supply the animals used in our tests.

We have continued to use the original test system which was designed specifically to give relatively fast but reliable evaluations from endpoints of antimalarial effect and host toxicity.

This test is based on the responses to candidate compounds by Plasmodium berghei malaria in mice as expressed in comparisons of the maximum survival time of treated malaria-infected animals and the survival time of untreated malaria-infected controls.

TABLE I

SUMMARY OF SCREENING LEVELS

DECEMBER, 1961 - MAY, 1970

	<u>NUMBER OF COMPOUNDS</u>	<u>NUMBER OF MICE</u>
DECEMBER, 1961 - MAY, 1964	6,915	250,000*
JUNE, 1964 - MAY, 1965	13,114	215,715
JUNE, 1965 - MAY, 1966	22,731	350,449
JUNE, 1966 - MAY, 1967	34,093	531,200
JUNE, 1967 - MAY, 1968	40,465	636,525
JUNE, 1968 - MAY, 1969	38,150	603,225
JUNE, 1969 - MAY, 1970	<u>22,376</u>	<u>411,270</u>
TOTAL -	177,844	2,998,384

*Estimate covers mice used in development of test and screening.

TABLE II

MONTHLY SCREENING LEVELS
JUNE 1, 1970 - MAY 31, 1971

<u>MONTH</u>	<u>NUMBER OF COMPOUNDS</u>	<u>NUMBER OF MICE</u>
JUNE	2,130	35,925
JULY	1,059	19,140
AUGUST	692	14,310
SEPTEMBER	884	19,140
OCTOBER	1,073	19,140
NOVEMBER	1,264	23,925
DECEMBER	1,484	25,125
JANUARY	1,385	23,910
FEBRUARY	1,328	23,760
MARCH	2,330	39,045
APRIL	2,650	45,330
MAY	<u>1,829</u>	<u>33,390</u>
TOTAL	18,108	322,140

Using young ICR/HA Swiss mice and a standard inoculum of Plasmodium berghei it has been possible to produce a consistently uniform disease that is fatal to 100% of untreated animals within 6 to 8 days.

Since an established disease is less responsive to treatment than a disease in the early stages of development, treatment is withheld deliberately until a high degree of parasitemia has become evident.

Test compounds were administered parenterally in a single dose on the third day post-infection by which time a 10-15% parasitemia has developed.

To be classified as active, a compound must suppress the disease and produce an unquestionably significant increase, 100% or more, in the life span of the treated animals over that of the untreated controls.

The severity of the challenges set up in our test system enhances the reliability of our evaluations and the antimalarial potential of the compounds selected for intensive preclinical studies.

M E T H O D

ANIMAL HOSTS. The total supply of animals needed to screen candidate compounds was obtained from our own breeding colony of ICR/HA Swiss mice. Test animals weigh from 15 to 18 grams, weight variations in any given experimental or control group being carefully limited to 2-3 grams. In any given test all animals are of a single sex and approximately the same age.

Animals on test are housed in metal-topped plastic cages, fed a standard laboratory diet and given water ad lib.

TEST PROCEDURE. Test animals receive an intraperitoneal injection of 0.5 ml. of a 1:100 dilution of heparinized heart's blood with a minimum of 90% parasitized cells, drawn from donor mice infected one week earlier with Plasmodium berghei. The donor strain is maintained by weekly passages in separate groups of mice inoculated with 0.5 ml. of a 1:500 dilution of heparinized heart's blood.

In order to check factors such as changes in the infectivity of our Plasmodium berghei strain or in the susceptibility of the host or to detect technical errors, a group of infected animals treated with pyrimethamine at dose levels known to produce definite increases in survival time is included in every experiment as a positive control.

DRUG ADMINISTRATION. Test compounds are dissolved or suspended in peanut oil before they are administered.

Treatment consists of a single dose given subcutaneously 3 days post-infection. At the time of treatment, a 10-15% parasitemia has developed. Although the disease is well established, it has not yet caused sufficient debility to affect an evaluation of the test compound's toxicity.

Deaths that occur before the 6th day, when untreated controls begin to die, are regarded as the result of a compound's toxic effects and not as the result of action by the infecting parasite.

In each experiment the compound on test is administered in graded doses. Increases in the dose levels of highly active compounds usually are followed by increases in the survival time of the treated mice.

If an active drug is toxic for the host, the toxicity of this compound may become a limiting factor to changes in dose levels.

Treated animals alive at the end of 60 days are considered as cured.

DRUG ACTIVITY. Acceptance of a drug as being sufficiently active for detailed studies is predicated on the margin between the maximum tolerated dose (MTD) and the minimum dose producing a significant effect (MED). A maximum tolerated dose is defined as the highest dose causing no more than one of five animals to die. The minimum effective dose is defined as the minimum dose increasing the life span of treated animals by 100% over the life span of untreated controls.

An increase of 100% in survival time is considered the minimum significantly effective response for a candidate compound.

Clearly inactive compounds are rejected after one test, borderline compounds after two tests. Active compounds are subjected to a dose-response curve so that the spread between the maximum tolerated dose (MTD) and the minimum dose producing a significant effect (MED) may be established.

COMPOUNDS WITH DEFINITE CHEMOTHERAPEUTIC ACTIVITY AGAINST PLASMODIUM BERGHEI IN MICE

Of the 18,108 compounds tested from June 1, 1970, through May 31, 1971, over 641 demonstrated a degree of antimalarial activity sufficient to produce at least 100% increases in the survival time of treated Plasmodium berghei infected mice.

Supplementary procedures, using different hosts and parasites and performing reliably either as confirmatory tests or as other primary screens, are desirable adjuncts to any screening program.

We have developed a simple but dependable supplementary test with Plasmodium gallinaceum malaria in chicks.

39,530 compounds were screened for antimalarial activity in chicks infected with Plasmodium gallinaceum in the period from January, 1965, to June, 1970, covered by Contract No. DA-49-193-MD-2218.

Table III summarizes the number of compounds tested and the number of chicks used under the original contract.

This program is continuing under Contract No. DADA-17-70-C-0100, activated June 1, 1970.

36,625 compounds were tested for antimalarial activity from June 1, 1970, through May 31, 1971.

Table IV records the number of compounds tested and the number of chicks used from June 1, 1970, through May 31, 1971.

Using 9-12 days old chicks and a standard inoculum of Plasmodium gallinaceum, we have been able to produce a consistently uniform disease that is fatal to 100% of untreated controls within 72-96 hours.

In this test, as in our mouse test, the antimalarial activity of candidate compounds is assessed by comparing the maximum survival time of treated malaria-infected chicks and the survival time of untreated malaria-infected controls.

As in the mouse test, a compound has been considered active if it has produced increases of at least 100% in the survival time of treated chicks over the survival time of untreated controls.

Again as in the mouse test, acceptance of a test compound's antimalarial activity was further predicated on the margin between the maximum tolerated dose (MTD) and the minimum dose producing a significant effect (MED).

A maximum tolerated dose is defined as the highest dose causing no more than one of five animals to die. A minimum effective dose is defined as the minimum dose increasing the life span of treated animals 100% over the life span of untreated controls.

M E T H O D

TEST ANIMALS. This test is done with 9-12 day old white leghorn cockerels.

Birds of fairly uniform stock, purchased from local hatcheries, are delivered to the laboratory when 1 day old and then maintained under standard conditions, including a non-medicated diet, until they are ready for testing.

TEST PROCEDURE. Chicks on test are given an intrajugular injection of 0.2 ml. of heparinized heart's blood infected with Plasmodium gallinaceum and having a minimum of 80-90% parasitized red blood cells.

The parasitized blood is drawn by cardiac puncture from donor birds that had been infected 72 hours earlier with Plasmodium gallinaceum.

Donor strains are maintained in separate groups of chicks, 14-16 days old, that also receive inoculations of heparinized infected heart's blood.

In every experiment 100% of the untreated controls have died within 72-96 hours post-infection.

In order to check factors such as changes in the infectivity of our Plasmodium gallinaceum strain or in the susceptibility of the host or to detect technical errors, a group of infected birds treated with pyrimethamine at dose levels known to produce definite increases in survival time has been included in every experiment as a positive control.

DRUG ADMINISTRATION. Candidate compounds are dissolved or suspended in peanut oil before they are administered.

In this supplementary test treatment consists of a single dose that is administered either subcutaneously or per os immediately after infection.

Each experiment is done with graded doses of the compound on test, and increases in the dose levels of highly active compounds were generally followed by increases in the survival time of the treated chicks.

If an active drug was toxic for the host, its toxicity became a limiting factor to changes in dosages.

Deaths that occurred within 48 hours after infection and treatment were considered as deaths due to the toxic effects of a test compound, not as the result of the infection introduced by the Plasmodium gallinaceum parasite.

Chicks with survival periods of 30 days are recorded as cured.

DRUG ACTIVITY. In the chick test, as in the mouse test, an increase of 100% in survival time has been considered as the minimum significantly effective response to the antimalarial activity of a compound.

COMPOUNDS WITH DEFINITE CHEMOTHERAPEUTIC ACTIVITY AGAINST PLASMODIUM GALLINACEUM MALARIA IN CHICKS. Of the 36,625 compounds tested in chicks from June 1, 1970, to May 31, 1971, 1,483 demonstrated a degree of activity that produced a minimum of 100% increase in the survival time of Plasmodium gallinaceum infected chicks.

TABLE III

SUMMARY OF SCREENING LEVELS

JANUARY, 1965 - MAY, 1970

	<u>NUMBER OF COMPOUNDS</u>	<u>NUMBER OF CHICKS</u>
JANUARY, 1965 - MAY, 1965	375	5,715
JUNE, 1965 - MAY, 1966	2,400	31,935
JUNE, 1966 - SEPTEMBER, 1966*	1,002	17,220
SEPTEMBER, 1967 - MAY, 1968	2,982	24,855
JUNE, 1968 - MAY, 1969	6,722	64,625
JUNE, 1969 - MAY, 1970	<u>26,049</u>	<u>166,765</u>
TOTAL	39,530	311,115

*In September of 1966, an outbreak of an avian infectious disease involving entire flocks made it impossible to get the healthy birds that we required, and the chick test was temporarily dropped.

TABLE IV

MONTHLY SCREENING LEVELS

JUNE 1, 1970 - MAY 31, 1971

<u>MONTH</u>	<u>NUMBER OF COMPOUNDS</u>	<u>NUMBER OF CHICKS</u>
JUNE	4,164	22,165
JULY	3,758	20,380
AUGUST	3,841	20,515
SEPTEMBER	4,081	22,340
OCTOBER	4,112	22,130
NOVEMBER	3,563	19,000
DECEMBER	3,458	17,385
JANUARY	3,039	16,195
FEBRUARY	2,336	13,380
MARCH	3,131	16,705
APRIL	882	5,005
MAY	<u>260</u>	<u>2,060</u>
TOTAL	36,625	197,260

Although this screening procedure may be useful as a confirmatory test and/or another primary screen of antimalarial activity, its basic purpose is the assessment of prophylactic values of candidate compounds.

Under Contract No. DA-49-193-MD-2218, the initial phase of this study depended entirely on weekly supplies of frozen infected material shipped from an outside source.

Within a period of twelve months studies involving approximately 12,000 chicks and 200 compounds indicated that this method of obtaining infected material would not provide us with a sporozoite-induced avian test approaching the degree of uniformity and reproducibility of our blood-induced mouse screen and our blood-induced avian screen.

It was evident that we would continue to be hampered unless we prepared our own infected material.

Under Contract No. DADA 17-70-C-0100, activated June 1, 1970, a mosquito-rearing facility was set up on our premises to provide the Aedes aegypti that we would require.

The sporozoite-induced avian malaria test that we propose to develop, like our blood-induced mouse test and our blood-induced avian test, is to be based on mortality, and not on morbidity.

This approach has required modifications in methods of rearing and handling of both non-infected and infected mosquitoes.

These modifications, highly controlled, include:

- (a) nutritional requirements of larvae and pupae;
- (b) satisfactory methods of feeding and watering adult mosquitoes prior to and following infected blood meals;
- (c) studies evaluating the effects of various types of blood meals;
- (d) evaluations of effects produced by different methods for preparing standard inocula;
- (e) evaluation of various avenues of drug administration and regimens.

Based on preliminary results obtained from studies involving about 25,000 chicks, we feel that this procedure will approximate the standards demonstrated in our blood-induced mouse screen and our blood-induced avian screen.

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